

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

8617 1. A software system for providing an interface between a radiology information system and a central dictation system, said software system including:

5 a first application module for exchanging data messages with the radiology information system;

a second application module for exchanging data messages with the central dictation system and with the first application module; and

a database management system; wherein:

10 the first application module includes a procedure for accessing the database management system; and

the second application module includes a procedure for accessing the database management system.

15 2. A software system according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the first application module and the second application module programs a first computer device and the database management system programs a second computer device which is separate from, but interfaced to, the first computer device.

20 3. A software system according to claim 2, wherein the first computer device includes a mass storage component in which the central dictation system stores voice files corresponding to dictation jobs.

4. A software system according to claim 3, wherein the radiology information system is maintained in a third computer device which is separate from the first and second computer devices but which is interfaced to the first computer device.

5. A software system according to claim 1, further comprising:

a first protocol DLL for transmitting data messages between the first application module and the central dictation system;

a second protocol DLL; and

a communication DLL for transmitting data messages between the second protocol DLL and the radiology information system; the second protocol DLL transmitting messages between the second application module and the communication DLL.

6. A method of interfacing a central dictation system to a radiology information system, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a first application module for exchanging data messages with the radiology information system;

providing a second application module for exchanging data messages with the central dictation system and with the first application module;

providing a database management system;

transmitting queries from said first application module to said database management system; and

transmitting queries from said second application module to said database management system.

7. A software system including multiple software modules, wherein a respective trace buffer is provided for each of said software modules, each trace buffer for storing a plurality of records, each of said records indicative of an instruction executed by the respective software module.

8. A software system according to claim 7, wherein each of said trace buffers is maintained in RAM.

9. A software system according to claim 8, wherein each of said trace buffers is configured as a ring buffer.

10. A software system according to claim 8, wherein the respective contents of each trace buffer are dumped to a nonvolatile storage device in response to occurrence of an event in any one of the software modules.

11. A method of managing a software system in which messages are passed between a first process and a second process by means of a server socket in the first process and a client socket in the second process, the client socket for sending said messages and the server socket for receiving said messages, the method comprising the steps of:

registering the server socket in the first process;

instantiating the server socket in the first process;

placing the server socket into an accept mode in which the server socket awaits initiation of communication by the client socket; and

placing the server socket into a receive mode upon initiation of communication by the client socket, the server socket receiving at least one message from the client socket in the receive mode;

wherein the server socket is maintained in existence and placed in the accept mode upon the client socket terminating communication with the server socket.

12. In a method of managing a software system in which messages are passed between a first process and a second process by means of a server socket in the first process and a client socket in the second process, the client socket for sending said messages and the server socket for receiving said messages, wherein the method comprises registering the server socket in the first process, instantiating the server socket in the first process, placing the server socket into an

accept mode in which the server socket awaits initiation of communication by the client socket, and placing the server socket into a receive mode upon initiation of communication by the client socket, the server socket receiving at least one message from the client socket in the receive mode; the improvement wherein the server socket is maintained in existence and placed in the accept mode upon the client socket terminating communication with the server socket.

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